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The Knitting Club Meets

Or

Just Back from France

A Comedy in One Act

By

HELEN SHERMAN GRIFFITH

*Author of "Getting the Range," "An Alarm of Fire,"
"The Dumb Waiter," "A Large Order," "Maid
to Order," "A Man's Voice," "A Psychological
Moment," "The Scarlet Bonnet," "The
Wrong Miss Mather," "The Wrong
Package," etc.*

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The Knitting Club Meets

CHARACTERS

ROSAMOND ALLEN, *the hostess.*
ELEANOR KENT, *her best friend.*
LUCY GORDON,
ALICE LANE,
MYRA FIELDS,
GRACE BENNETT,
LYDIA GREENE,
NORA, *the maid.*
JANE RIVERS, *just back from France.*

} *members of the Knitting Club,*



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The Knitting Club Meets

SCENE.—ROSAMOND ALLEN'S *luxuriously furnished drawing-room. A tea table at one side; exits back and R. Time, the present.*

(Curtain rises disclosing ROSAMOND putting finishing touches to room.)

ROSAMOND *(looking at clock)*. I do hope every one will be prompt, so we can get a lot of knitting done. Sometimes I wonder if we wouldn't get more accomplished if each of us stayed at home and worked quietly by ourselves. We talk so much—and eat so much!—at these meetings. By the way, has Norah brought in enough teacups? *(Surveys tea-table.)*

(Bell heard. Slight pause; then enter NORAH, back.)

NORAH. Mrs. Kent, ma'am.

(Draws aside for ELEANOR'S entrance.)

ROSAMOND *(cordially, coming forward)*. Oh, Eleanor, I'm so glad you've come early! *(ELEANOR returns her greeting coldly, and crosses room. ROSAMOND, stopping NORAH as she goes out, back.)* Norah, have you arranged the knitting display in the library, as I said?

NORAH *(pausing in doorway)*. Yes, ma'am.

ROSAMOND. And that last package—that came this morning. Did you open it and put the things with the rest?

NORAH *(hesitating and glancing at ELEANOR)*. I don't think the last package was meant for the knitting display, ma'am.

ROSAMOND. Indeed? I thought it was labeled for that. What was it, Norah?

NORAH (*embarrassed*). I—I—Mrs. Kent can tell you, ma'am. Her card was in it.

ELEANOR (*turning at sound of her name*). What's that? Oh, yes, I sent my things over this morning. Sorry to have been so late with them, Rosamond.

ROSAMOND. Fetch the package to me, Norah.

NORAH. Yes, ma'am.

(NORAH *crosses room and exits, R.* During this dialogue ELEANOR has wandered impatiently about room.)

ROSAMOND (*laughing*). Why do you suppose Norah thought your things did not belong to the rest, Eleanor? Are they so beautifully done?

ELEANOR (*absent-mindedly*). I don't know, I'm sure. Rosamond, I came early this afternoon, to ask you —

Enter NORAH, R., carrying a heap of gay colored knitted garments.

NORAH (*holding them out to ROSAMOND*). These is them, ma'am.

ROSAMOND (*staring, and lifting card that lies on top of heap*). Why, Eleanor, what are these?

ELEANOR (*turning from restless fingering of books and photographs on table*). What are what? Oh—those are my contribution to the knitting exhibition.

ROSAMOND. But —

ELEANOR (*in vexed tone*). You mean that they are not of a hideous gray or khaki color? Well, why should they be, pray? The poor men must *starve* for color.

NORAH (*thoughtfully*). Perhaps they'se fer "The Rainbow Division," ma'am.

ELEANOR (*sharply*). Nonsense, Norah. Don't be impertinent.

ROSAMOND (*quietly*). Put them with the others in the library, please, Norah. (*Exit NORAH, R., with bundle, sulkily.* ROSAMOND, *graciously.*) They are very beautiful, Eleanor. You might almost keep them for Christmas presents. (*Sits herself and takes up knitting.*)

ELEANOR (*throwing herself into a chair near ROSAMOND, and playing with her gloves*). Rosamond, is it true that some one is coming to address us this afternoon?

ROSAMOND (*surprised*). True? Why, of course. You yourself helped us to arrange it, at the committee meeting. I telephoned the Red Cross headquarters, as we agreed, and they have promised to send a speaker.

ELEANOR. Well, do you know who she is?

ROSAMOND (*a little irritated*). Of course I do. What are you driving at, Eleanor? Do you think I have been inefficient in getting this thing up?

ELEANOR. Who is the speaker to be?

ROSAMOND. I think her name is—Smith—I'm not sure. I have it down in my book. (*She crosses to writing desk, takes out a small memorandum book and brings it back, sitting down as she opens it.*) Yes, here it is. "Miss Isabel Smith," from somewhere in Ohio.

(*She holds open book out to ELEANOR.*)

ELEANOR (*apologetically, taking book*). Oh, I—I beg pardon. (*Glances at book.*)

ROSAMOND. What has got into you, Eleanor? You and I have worked on so many committees, and everything has always —

ELEANOR (*interrupting*). Ah, you did not read it all, Rosamond. You have noted here—(*reads*) "Miss Isabel Smith, or a substitute if she does not turn up in time."

ROSAMOND (*calmly, knitting*). They always make that stipulation at the Red Cross rooms.

ELEANOR. Well, I happen to know that there is to be a substitute this afternoon.

ROSAMOND. Well, what of it? You speak as if it were a tragedy. None of the club know Miss Smith, or have heard her speak, so they won't feel that they are missing anything.

ELEANOR (*tragically*). That is not my point.

ROSAMOND. Well, then, what is your point? I declare, Eleanor, you are very odd to-day. Do tell me what is the matter. Are you afraid they won't be able

to send a satisfactory substitute, and what has happened to Miss Smith?

ELEANOR (*frowning*). They have already chosen the substitute, Rosamond. (*Eyeing her suspiciously.*) Are you sure you don't know anything about it?

ROSAMOND. Why should I? Mrs. Roberts knows that if Miss Smith failed to come, a substitute would be perfectly satisfactory to us.

ELEANOR. But not this substitute. Rosamond, they are sending Jane Rivers here this afternoon.

ROSAMOND (*looking pleased*). Jane Rivers? Why, I did not know she had got back. How lovely! I wish I had known in time. I'd have had some roses for her.

ELEANOR (*indignantly*). "How lovely," indeed! Is that all your friendship for me is worth?

ROSAMOND. Why, Eleanor, what can you mean? What have I done?

ELEANOR. What have you done? You have forgotten that Jane Rivers and I are sworn enemies.

ROSAMOND. Oh, that old quarrel? Surely, Eleanor, you have not cherished that all these years?

ELEANOR (*offended*). It is not a question of "cherishing." Jane Rivers hurt my feelings beyond all forgiveness. A few years more or less do not matter when one's heart has been wounded to the core.

ROSAMOND (*mildly*). Oh, Eleanor dear, it was not as bad as that. It really was nothing more than a school-girl quarrel. You have exaggerated its significance by thinking of it too much.

ELEANOR. It is easy enough for you to talk, when it was not you who suffered.

ROSAMOND. But, my dear —

ELEANOR. Never mind "buts." The question is, what are you going to do about this afternoon?

ROSAMOND. What can I do? Everything must go on as arranged.

ELEANOR. And you are going to let her come to us—here—and preach to us?

ROSAMOND. I don't think she'll preach. Jane was never one of the preachy kind.

ELEANOR. My enemy set above me—here in the house

of my best friend! I never believed I should be so affronted!

ROSAMOND. I don't want to affront you, Eleanor. Nothing could be further from my thoughts! Why, my dear ——

(Bell heard.)

ELEANOR *(turning to listen)*. They are beginning to come. I shall have to brazen it out. Don't let any of the girls know how I feel, Rosamond. I shall never let any one say that I was routed by Jane Rivers.

ROSAMOND. Oh, Eleanor, dear, I am so sorry ——

NORAH *(in doorway, back)*. Miss Gordon, ma'am.
[Exit.]

Enter LUCY GORDON. *She is rather a silly person dressed in the height of fashion, and carries a magnificent knitting-bag.*

LUCY *(gushingly, coming forward)*. How do, Rosamond, dearie. *(Kisses her.)* And Eleanor, too. "The early bird"? *(Kisses her.)*

ELEANOR. If you mean you think I came early to catch the worm of gossip, you may rest comfortable. You haven't missed anything.

(She takes out her knitting, not gray or khaki, but bright pink, and sits in chair rather removed from others, and knits fast.)

LUCY *(gayly)*. What, honey, breaking the rules? Only soldiers' knitting here, you know.

ELEANOR *(without turning her head)*. This is for a soldier.

LUCY *(coquettishly)*. Oh—one on leave? *(Fumbles in her gorgeous bag.)* Where is my work?

(Bell heard. Slight pause.)

NORAH *(in doorway, back)*. Miss Lane, ma'am.
[Exit.]

Enter ALICE LANE, *dressed smartly but simply in tailored suit; carries cretonne knitting-bag.*

ALICE (*coming forward*). Then I am not the first. I see you are all at work already.

(*She shakes hands with the three and seats herself, taking out her knitting.*)

LUCY (*with a foolish little scream*). I declare, I believe I've left my work at home! Isn't that silly of me?

ROSAMOND (*dryly*). It is, rather, but I can supply you with needles and wool.

(ROSAMOND *lays down her knitting and exits, R.*)

LUCY (*in kittenish manner*). It is odd how forgetful I am. I particularly wanted my knitting to-day, so as to ask one of you to show me how to turn my heel.

ELEANOR (*over her shoulder*). I should think that would be easy enough for you to do by yourself, with those ridiculous *Louis Quinze* heels you are wearing.

LUCY (*arching her eyebrows and speaking sotto voce to ALICE*). Not in a good humor to-day.

(*She and ALICE talk aside.*)

(*Bell heard. Slight pause.*)

NORAH (*in doorway, back*). Mrs. Fields, ma'am.

[*Exit.*]

Enter MYRA FIELDS, dressed in uniform of Emergency Aid—or Motor Messenger Service; carries Red Cross knitting bag.

MYRA (*coming forward, consciously*). How do you like it, girls? It came from the tailor's just as I was starting and I went back up-stairs and put it on. Why, where is Rosamond?

ROSAMOND (*from doorway, R.*). Here I am. How do you do? (*She comes forward, carrying ball of wool and needles.*) Lucy forgot her work, as usual, so I am getting some for her. Why, Myra, your new uniform! Isn't it becoming! Turn round and let us see how it hangs.

(MYRA *revolves slowly before the admiring eyes of ROSAMOND, ALICE and LUCY.*)

ELEANOR (*over her shoulder, knitting furiously*). As if the "hang" mattered when she's on duty.

MYRA (*serenely, sitting down and taking out her knitting*). I think it always matters. A woman can always put anything through twice as well if she knows she's well dressed.

NORAH (*at door, back*). Mrs. Bennett, ma'am.

[*Exit, back.*]

Enter GRACE BENNETT, a cheerful, motherly looking person, well but comfortably dressed. Carries a capacious, rather shabby bag.

GRACE. I'm sorry to be late, girls. (*Nods to every one, shakes hands with ROSAMOND, sits down and begins to knit at once.*) But poor, dear little Tommy fell down and bumped his precious head, and I had to stop to comfort him. Am I the last? (*Bell heard.*) Not quite, anyhow.

NORAH (*at doorway, back*). Miss Greene, ma'am.

[*Exit.*]

Enter LYDIA GREENE, very intellectual in appearance, and rather down-at-heel in dress.

ROSAMOND (*greeting her*). Late again, Lydia. What was it this time; *vers libre* or an abtruse essay on the soul?

LYDIA (*smiling good-naturedly*). I dare say I am absent-minded about the time, but I don't forget my knitting as often as frivolous Lucy, or disobey the government dictates as does the daring Eleanor.

(*Takes knitting out of a shabby lawyer's bag and begins to work.*)

ELEANOR. Humph! The government hadn't tried wearing nothing but khaki when it made that rule, I'm sure. The men's socks and sweaters are always underneath—can't possibly be seen from a distance—so why shouldn't they be a cheerful pink or blue instead of that dreadful, bilious no-color? Ugh! One day, to experiment, I put on that hideous khaki dress I was induced to buy, borrowed Alice's khaki hat and wore them, with-

out a spot of color for relief, the entire day. And I assure you, girls, I went to bed in a chill—nervous depression. Those were the doctor's very words. Then I began to make blue socks and pink sweaters for the men.

LUCY. You dear, sympathetic creature! I have heard that color did affect the nervous system. Lydia, did you ever try color schemes for writing? Who was it who could never write the love scenes in her novels except in a room with red wall-paper?

ROSAMOND. Speaking of red wall-paper, don't you girls want to go into the library and see the Red Cross work? I've had it spread out there, and I'm sure you'll all be surprised to see how much we've done. (MYRA, GRACE and LYDIA *put down their knitting and move toward door* R. with ROSAMOND. ELEANOR *continues to knit, her back half turned*. ROSAMOND, *from doorway*, R.) Do come, Eleanor. Your colored things relieve the monotony, and I promise there'll be no monotony.

(*All pause*. LUCY and ALICE *have risen to go, but pause to talk*. ELEANOR *ungraciously rises, keeping her knitting in her hands, and joins group at door*. They *exeunt*, R. LUCY and ALICE *remain on stage*.)

ALICE (*looking off R. after ELEANOR*). I do notice that she is a bit "grouchy," Lucy. How do you account for it?

LUCY (*lowering her voice and glancing toward door, R.*). Of course I can't be sure, but I have drawn my own conclusions. John Mason went to France yesterday. At least, he had sailing orders.

ALICE (*also in lowered tone*). You mean—you really think there *was* something between them?

LUCY. You know as much as I do, my dear. We have all been on the guess, you know, all winter. Now he goes off and Eleanor is like a bear with a sore head. It seems to me you have two and two.

ALICE. I wonder. They say—— I thought her marriage a brilliant success.

LUCY. You can't always tell. Why, when——

Enter the others, R., talking.

GRACE (*coming forward*). I have come to the end of my ball. Who will hold some wool for me?

LUCY (*hurrying forward*). Let me hold it, Grace. I'd love to.

(*Every one smiles.*)

ELEANOR (*going back to her chair and knitting*). A chair back is just as good, Grace. You ought not to encourage slacking. I move we set a fine for every one not finishing a garment this week.

(*LUCY and GRACE sit on chairs facing, LUCY holding wool, GRACE winding. Others group themselves with their knitting.*)

MYRA. That would be hardly fair, Eleanor. With my new duties I have very little time for knitting.

LUCY (*simpering*). If some one will show me how to do the heel, and toe off for me, I can have one sock ready by the end of the week.

ROSAMOND (*looking at clock*). It is time for our speaker to arrive. Shall we wait tea until she comes?

GRACE. We might start tea; she can have hers as soon as she comes; then it will all be over and no interruption when she begins to speak.

ROSAMOND. A very practical suggestion, and I shall follow it. Eleanor dear, you are nearest the bell; ring it for me, please.

(*ELEANOR rises, presses bell button and returns to chair.*)

LYDIA. Who is coming, Rosamond? Somebody down at the Service House this morning said Miss Smith had not come. I presume they are sending a substitute?

ELEANOR (*sniffing*). Humph! They are, worse luck.

MYRA (*turning to ELEANOR*). Why, do you know who it is, Eleanor? Do tell us, like a dear.

ELEANOR. Rosamond may have that honor. She knows, too.

ROSAMOND. I did not know until Eleanor told me just now, but —

Enter NORAH, back.

NORAH. Did you ring, ma'am?

ROSAMOND. Yes, Norah. You may serve tea now.

(ROSAMOND rises, crosses room and sits beside tea-table. ALICE joins her, still knitting. Exit NORAH, back.)

ALICE. Let me pass things. I love to help. (*Looks at tea-table.*) What delicious French cakes!

ROSAMOND. I am afraid they are not according to Hoover, but cook did not have time to bake war-cake to-day, with the cinnamon bun, nut bread and sandwiches, so I telephoned Henri's for them.

Enter NORAH with teapot and other things, which she sets on tray, then hands a plate to each guest. ROSAMOND pours tea and ALICE hands cups. When NORA has distributed plates she passes sandwiches, cakes, and so forth—a great profusion of everything.

MYRA. But you haven't told us yet who the speaker is to be, Rosamond.

LUCY (*gushingly, as NORAH passes cakes*). Oh, what delicious little cakes! Grace, honey, can't we finish the wool later?

ROSAMOND. Suppose we keep the identity of the speaker as a surprise. I can promise none of you will be disappointed.

ELEANOR (*sarcastically*). Oh, of course not. She is so popular! I won't take any tea, thanks.

(ROSAMOND sighs. LUCY and ALICE exchange glances.)

GRACE (*sipping her tea*). Well, I hope she won't ask us for any money. I haven't a penny left—literally not a penny, until the first of the month.

LUCY (*patting a gold-link chain bag that hangs from her wrist*). Nor I. But she can't ask us for money. We are protected by the War Chest.

GRACE. The War Chest is a very poor protection, my dear, in my mind—like a wire fence around a garden;

there are always crevices for the rabbits and woodchucks to creep in.

MYRA (*good-naturedly*). Meaning to say that those of us who go begging for our pet war-measures are bunnies robbing a lettuce bed?

(*They all laugh.*)

ALICE. I think we have done our share in giving, in this town. We over-topped our quota in all the "drives," and I'm sure we've given up enough luxuries.

LUCY (*taking another cake as NORAH passes them*). Haven't we! If it weren't for these weekly meetings of the knitting club, I think I should starve. Why, I'm even ashamed to get an ice-cream soda when I go downtown—unless somebody's with me.

(*Bell heard. NORAH puts down plate of cakes and exits, back.*)

ELEANOR (*to LUCY*). And what is the function of the "somebody" with you? Does iniquity, like misery, love company—or does she generally pay for the soda?

MYRA. Lucy always holds up her end. I can say that for her. (*To LUCY*.) My dear, that five dollars you gave me last week just tided that poor family over until I could get the proper authorities on the job. I really think you saved them from starvation.

ROSAMOND. Eleanor dear, do please take a cup of tea. You know it always rests you so.

ELEANOR. Eases my temper, I suppose you mean. No, thank you. I ——

NORAH (*in doorway, back*). Miss Rivers, ma'am.

[*Exit, back.*]

Enter JANE RIVERS. The person cast for this should be very slender, and have a spiritual face. She is dressed in a shabby tailor suit, somewhat out of date, but with neat hat, gloves and shoes.

ROSAMOND (*rising and coming forward*). Jane Rivers! Oh, how glad we all are to see you!

(*She kisses JANE. The others all crowd round, except ELEANOR, who rises, but stands apart and knits.*)

LUCY (*kissing JANE*). You sweet thing! When did you come?

ALICE. I never was so glad to see any one in my life!

MYRA. This is a treat!

GRACE. You precious old thing; you look tired out. Sit down and have a cup of tea.

LYDIA. If I had known of this happy event in time, I should have had a poem of greeting ready.

Enter NORA, back, with fresh teacup. ROSAMOND goes back to table and pours tea. JANE advances front and sees ELEANOR.

JANE. Why, Eleanor Kent! Oh, I *am* glad to see you, dear!

(She goes to ELEANOR with both hands outstretched.

ELEANOR affects to have dropped a stitch and bends over her knitting.)

ELEANOR (*awkwardly*). How do, Jane—excuse me just a minute. I ——

JANE (*laughing whole-heartedly and sweeping ELEANOR'S knitting aside*). I won't wait—not a second, my dear. Kiss me at once, you humbug. You have had three years in which to pick up dropped stitches. *(She catches ELEANOR by her elbows and whirls her around to face the light.)* Yes, married life agrees with you, my dear. You must tell me all about him, some time—what he said, what you said,—what the world said. *(Reminiscently.)* Let me see, didn't you and I have a quarrel of some sort, once upon a time?

(The rest have grouped themselves in background, drinking tea, eating cakes and sandwiches, and looking on or talking aside. At JANE'S words, ROSAMOND gives a gasp, and half rises as if to interrupt. ELEANOR looks embarrassed.)

ELEANOR (*with downcast head*). Why—yes—we did quarrel—Jane ——

JANE (*laughing*). I wonder what it was about? Some silly disagreement about boys, or the color of our eyes, I suppose. *(Dropping ELEANOR'S arms and look-*

ing sad all at once.) How little those things matter now. Oh, girls, how little anything matters but ——— (*Recovers herself with a little laugh.*) But I am not on the lecture platform yet, am I? Did some one murmur something about tea, Rosamond? Please give it to me strong, with lots of sugar. I haven't tasted sugar for—centuries, I think. And here you have it in lumps. Actually *in lumps!* (*Stands behind tea-table, facing audience, and holds up a lump of sugar.*) If you all knew what a real curiosity that is!

(*ROSAMOND gives her a cup of tea. The others overwhelm her with cakes, candies, sandwiches. ELEANOR still stands aloof.*)

ELEANOR. I can't see anything so curious about a lump of sugar.

JANE (*quietly*). No, you wouldn't, Eleanor. You see, you don't know. None of you know—oh, thanks, Rosamond dear, that is fine. Such thick, yellow cream! (*Takes taste of tea, then eyes the various plates of cakes and sandwiches that are held out to her.*) O-o-oh! Chocolate cake! Angel food—rightly named! Coconut kisses! Oh, oh, oh! I feel like a child at her first Christmas tree. I must have some of everything. (*Laughs and heaps cakes on her saucer. She nibbles at one, the others looking on, smiling. Suddenly she drops the cake, and sets down the cup.*) I can't eat it! I can't. It chokes me. Oh, girls, you don't know—you don't know! You can't know until you have been there, and seen what I have seen. Or—(*she pauses and looks about her gravely*) until it all happens to us over here. It can, you know. Why, girls, think of it. Families with as many comforts and luxuries as all of us have been used to—with refined tastes and exquisite manners—turned out, desolate, penniless, at the mercy of strangers for food and clothing. Think of the young households broken up—suppose you, Eleanor, just beginning your married life as you are, should be called upon suddenly to give it all up; your pretty house, your maids, even the furniture of your own selection, and go back to your father's, or father-in-law's to live, uncer-

tain each day of your husband's fate! Thousands—tens of thousands of young married people have broken up homes like that—happy, comfortable little homes chosen and arranged with such pride—and never a murmur. More heartrending still (*she pauses a moment*) three-quarters of those young wives and mothers are wearing black now. Yet they would do it all over again—still without a murmur, because it is for their country. More! It is for civilization—and for us. For us! (*Pause, lowering her voice.*) And over here we eat chocolate cake and prate about the horrors of war! Oh, girls, why can't America get busy? Why can't we help them?

ELEANOR (*more meekly than she has spoken yet*). We have bought Liberty bonds, and ——

JANE. Liberty bonds, forsooth! A magnificent gift to civilization! Why, buying Liberty bonds is just nothing but a cracker-jack investment. That is the trouble, Eleanor. In just the few days I have been home, I have discovered the difference between us and the French women. They have given everything; we, nothing—that we could not spare. The difference is greater than that. Here, we still think of self. In France the individual is gone. Individual taste, individual comfort—even individual safety—count for nothing. That is what I have come back to teach our women. (*Slight pause. The women all move back a little. They look deeply moved; one or two furtively brush away a tear.*) Of course I have come for something else, too. We all want money. I must have it, girls, for those women over there—the ones who wear black—the ones who carry babies that never saw their fathers—the ones who used to live in homes like this, and who now inhabit bare attics, toiling, toiling, toiling long hours—for a crust of black bread our pampered dogs would scorn. Oh, those women of France! If only I could make you see—make you understand!

(*She stops, putting her hands in front of her face. The others gaze at her, hushed, silent, and awestruck. Then, impulsively, ROSAMOND jumps up, pushing*

aside with a gesture of repulsion the laden tea-table. She crosses to back of room, catches up an ornamental jar, empties its contents, and thrusts it into JANE'S hands.)

ROSAMOND. A melting pot, Jane—not for any individual, from any individual, but for the cause of Civilization against Chaos. Come, girls, give, give, give!

(When she has finished speaking ROSAMOND exits, R., hastily.)

JANE *(catching the spirit, and holding the bowl aloft)*. Yes, girls, give. Come, mortify your pet vanity.

(There is a slight pause. The women glance at one another shyly. Then GRACE suddenly puts her hand to her throat and unfastens a handsome brooch.)

GRACE. The children gave it to me for Christmas—saved their precious allowances for it—but——

(She steps forward and drops the brooch into the bowl. Enter ROSAMOND, R., with a check which she drops in bowl.)

ROSAMOND *(with a choked laugh)*. There go my dinner parties for many months to come.

LYDIA *(removing a handsome chain)*. I bought it with the money paid me for my first poem!

(Lays it tenderly in bowl.)

MYRA *(also taking off large, handsome brooch and dropping it in)*. It is one of my wedding presents, and it has been Fred's and my boast that we have never parted with any of them.

(ALICE pulls off a wrist watch, comes forward slowly, and drops it in.)

ALICE. I have wanted one, ever since they came in, and Father gave me this on my birthday.

(LUCY steps to C. of stage, fingers her gold-link bag, hesitates, then opens it and takes out roll of bills.)

LUCY. I had planned to stop in on my way home to

buy a new pair of boots. They were to cost sixteen dollars. (*Her voice takes on a note of horror.*) That did not sound so much—then. And enough stockings to match would have cost as much more ——

(*Slowly the bills flutter from her hand into the bowl. She closes the gold bag, eyes it a moment, then impulsively lays it, too, in the bowl.*)

ROSAMOND (*softly*). Bravo, Lucy!

JANE (*smiling with wet eyes, and looking from bowl to those around her*). Oh, girls, if you could know what this means to me! Come on, Eleanor—make haste or you will miss your privilege!

(*ELEANOR turns away, then turns back and moves c. stage; her face is tear-stained, her hands tremble. Slowly she lifts them to her neck and unclasps an exquisite pearl necklace. Every one but JANE gives an involuntary gasp. ELEANOR lays the string of pearls in the bowl, then leans across it and kisses JANE on the cheek.*)

ELEANOR (*brokenly*). I have been petty and—and individual, Jane. I am sorry.

(*JANE gives her a radiant smile in answer. Then some one—either one of the characters, if one can play and a piano can be used on the stage; if not, some one off stage—strikes the opening bars of the “Marseillaise.”*)

JANE (*stepping to front of stage and holding bowl aloft*). For the women of France—the patient, splendid women of France!

(*They sing the “Marseillaise.”*)

CURTAIN

MASTER PIERRE PATELIN

A Farce in Three Acts

Englised from an Early (1464) French Play

By Dr. Richard T. Holbrook

Of Bryn Mawr College

CHARACTERS

PIERRE PATELIN, *a lawyer.*

GUILLEMETTE, *his wife.*

GUILLAUME JOCEAULME, *a draper.*

TIBALT LAMBKIN, *a shepherd.*

THE JUDGE.

Four males, one female. Costumes of the period, amply suggested by reproductions of contemporary cuts; scenery, very simple and fully explained. Plays an hour and a half. A popular edition of this well-known French farce for schools. Its literary and historical interest very great, it is perfectly actable and absolutely modern in its dramatic appeal to an audience, and uproariously funny in its effect if presented with even slight skill. Altogether an ideal offering for schools and colleges. Professor Holbrook's version, here offered, has been acted with distinguished success at Bryn Mawr College and at The Little Theatre in Philadelphia, and a version adapted from the Holbrook text by Professor George P. Baker was successfully given at his "Workshop 47" in Cambridge. Strongly recommended. Free of royalty for amateur performance.

Price, 50 cents

JOLLY PLAYS FOR HOLIDAYS

A Collection of Christmas Plays for Children

By Carolyn Wells

COMPRISING

The Day Before Christmas. Nine males, eight females.

A Substitute for Santa Claus. Five males, two females.

Is Santa Claus a Fraud? Seventeen males, nine females and chorus.

The Greatest Day of the Year. Seven males, nineteen females.

Christmas Gifts of all Nations. Three males, three females and chorus.

The Greatest Gift. Ten males, eleven females.

The plays composing this collection are reprinted from "The Ladies' Home Journal" of Philadelphia and other popular magazines in answer to a persistent demand for them for acting purposes. Miss Wells' work requires no introduction to a public already familiar with her wit, her humor and her graceful and abundant fancy, all of which attractive qualities are amply exemplified in the above collection. These plays are intended to be acted by young people at the Christmas season, and give ample suggestions for costuming, decoration and other details of stage production. These demands are sufficiently elastic in character, however, to make it possible to shorten and simplify the performance to accommodate almost any stage or circumstances. The music called for is of the simplest and most popular sort, such as is to be found in every household and memory. This collection can be strongly recommended.

Price, cloth, post-paid by mail, 60 cents net

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

A Comedy Drama in Three Acts

By Orrin E. Wilkins

Ten males, six females. Costumes, modern ; scenery, two easy interiors. Plays a full evening. Bob Kendrick, college athlete and popular man, is in love with Dorothy Seabury, but she will not hear him until he has made a start in life. He runs for the office of District Attorney as part of a political trick of the "boss," Sullivan, but turns the trick and wins the election. His first official act is the prosecution of the Packing Company of which Dorothy's father is the head, which leads to his suicide and Dorothy's alienation. Later, when she knows that his strict pursuit of duty has not spared his own father's name, which was involved in the same scandal, she understands and forgives him. The political thread on which is strung a strong and varied story, introducing lots of comedy and a strong college flavor. Good enough for any purpose ; strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MR. WM. SEABURY, *Pres. of Seabury Packing Co.*

MR. HERBERT BROWNELL, *reporter of the "Tribune."*

RICHARD SEABURY, *senior at college.*

BOB KENDRICK, *a fixture at the university.*

BILLY REYNOLDS, *freshman at college.*

P. HOMER SULLIVAN, *politician.*

JOHN J. CROSBY, *district attorney, running for reëlection.*

JIMMIE, *office boy.*

HOWARD CALVERT, *Beverly's little brother.*

SAM, *Calvert's butler.*

AUNT HATTIE, *Wm. Seabury's sister.*

DOROTHY SEABURY, *Wm. Seabury's daughter.*

BEVERLY CALVERT,	} <i>Dorothy's chums.</i>
PEGGY MARSHALL,	
POLLY WHITNEY,	
MARGARET, <i>servant.</i>	

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Drawing-room of the Seabury residence.

ACT II. The district attorney's office, a few months later.

ACT III. Same as Act I, one year later.

A SUFFRAGETTE TOWN MEETING

An Entertainment in One Act

By Lilian Clisby Bridgham

Twenty female characters. Costumes, modern ; scenery, an ordinary room or hall—unimportant. Plays one hour. Presents a town meeting as it will be conducted by and by when the ladies have taken full charge of the public business. A shrewd and good-natured satire of present feminine peculiarities applied to this problem written for laughing purposes only. Just the thing for women's clubs.

Price, 25 cents

THE FIRST LADY OF THE LAND

A Play in Four Acts

By Charles Frederic Nirdlinger

Eleven male, eight female characters, and supers. Costumes, early American. Scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening. This charming comedy, well remembered for the delightful performance of its leading part by Elsie Ferguson, is peculiarly well suited for school performance since its witty lines and lively incidents relate a story of American history and involve the personalities of Aaron Burr, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and the charming Dolly Madison. For this reason and for its dramatic interest and value it is strongly recommended. Amateurs may produce it on payment of a royalty of \$25.00.

Price, 50 cents

CHARACTERS

JAMES MADISON, *Congressman from Virginia; afterwards Secretary of State in Thomas Jefferson's cabinet.*

AARON BURR, *Senator from New York; afterwards Vice-President of the United States.*

BOHLEN PINCKNEY, *the President's Secretary.*

SIR ANTHONY MERRY, *British Minister at Washington.*

DON CARLOS MARTINEZ, MARQUIS D'YRUJO, *Spanish Minister at Washington.*

MYNHEER VAN BERCKEL, *Minister from the Netherlands.*

LOUIS ANDRE PICHON, *Chargé d'Affaires for France.*

JENNINGS, *servant at Dolly Todd's; later at Madison's.*

DE VAUX, *Major-Domo at White House.*

THE COOK.

THE HAIR-DRESSER.

DOLLY TODD, *afterwards Mrs. James Madison.*

SALLY MCKEAN, *afterwards Marchioness D'Yrujo.*

MRS. SPARKLE.

SOPHIA SPARKLE, *her daughter; afterwards Madame Pichon.*

LADY MERRY.

THE HONORABLE ENA FERRAR, *Lady Merry's sister.*

VROU VAN BERCKEL.

MINISTER FROM RUSSIA and

COUNTESS DASHKOFF } *Silent figures in Act III.*

MINISTER FROM TURKEY

CLOTILDE, *maid at Dolly Todd's.*

FOOTMEN, VALETS, SERVANTS, ETC.

THE ARRIVAL OF KITTY

A Farce in Three Acts

By Norman Lee Swartout

Five male, four female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays a full evening. A piece in the "Charley's Aunt" class. Bobbie Baxter, pursuing his little love-affair with Jane against the opposition of her uncle, William Winkler, has occasion to disguise himself in female costume, and is taken for Kitty, an actress and close friend of Winkler, to the vast confusion of everything and everybody. Very funny and strongly recommended. Has been played professionally over two thousand times and may be produced by amateurs for a royalty of \$10.00.

Price, 50 cents

CHARACTERS

WILLIAM WINKLER.

AUNT JANE, *his sister.*

JANE, *his niece.*

BOBBIE BAXTER.

BENJAMIN MORE.

TING, *a bell-boy.*

SAM, *a colored porter.*

KITTY, *an actress.*

SUZETTE, *Aunt Jane's maid.*

THE MAN WHO WENT

(Originally produced under the title "*The Black Feather.*")

A Play in Four Acts

By W. A. Tremayne

Seven males, three females. Scenery, one interior and one exterior. Costumes, modern. Plays a full evening. Royalty, \$10.00 for the first and \$5.00 each for other immediately succeeding performances. An exceptionally stirring and effective play of the Great War, produced with great success in Canada as the successor of the popular "*The Man Who Stayed at Home.*" Jack Thornton, a King's Messenger, entrusted with important state papers for delivery in Vienna, is robbed of them through his attachment to a lady in the Austrian secret service, and his career jeopardized; but by the cleverness and daring of Dick Kent, of the English secret service, who is in love with his sister Evelyn, the plot is frustrated in a series of thrilling scenes, and all ends well. An exceptionally well built drama, full of sensations, ending in a strong last act full of "punch." A good play for any purpose, but ideally suited to the temper of the present. Plenty of comedy, easy to stage, and confidently recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

DICK KENT, *in the English Secret Service.*

JACK THORNTON, *a King's Messenger.*

BARON VON ARNHEIM, *in the German Secret Service.*

SIR GEORGE CAXTON, *in the British Foreign Office.*

HOGUE, *a German spy.*

BARNES, *a chauffeur.*

PATTON, *a keeper.*

EVELYN THORNTON, *Jack's sister.*

COUNTESS WANDA VON HOLTZBERG, *in the Austrian Secret Service.*

LADY VENETIA CAXTON, *Sir George's wife.*

The action of the play takes place in the early summer of 1914.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Jack Thornton's chambers in Portman Square, London. Dealing the cards. "Beware of the dog."

ACT II. A retired corner of Sir George Caxton's estate in Kent. Dick takes the first trick. "The son of his father."

ACT III. Jack Thornton's chambers. A bold play. "Drive like the devil, Barnes—we've got to make Charing Cross by nine."

ACT IV. Jack Thornton's chambers. Dick wins the game. "Tightening the bonds of Empire."

OUTWITTED

A Comedy Dramatic Novelty

By Harry L. Newton

One male, one female. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays twenty minutes. Sherman, a United States Secret Service man, encounters Sophie, supposed to represent the enemy, and a duel of wits ensues. Very exciting and swift in movement, with an unexpected ending. Good work and well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

A PLAY A MONTH

By Alice W. Chaplin

Twelve twenty minute sketches for female characters, providing a timely and appropriate entertainment for each month in the year. Suitable for church or school performance or for any other use of amateur theatricals.

Price, 30 cents

CONTENTS

Pickles, Bonbons, and Temper
(4 girls).

A Valentine Problem (3 girls).

Mad ! Mad ! (5 girls).

Because it Rained (4 girls).

May (5 girls).

That Boy (4 girls).

Independent Flynn (5 girls).

Home and Mother (6 girls).

All for a Man (6 girls).

Behind the Screen (5 girls).

Thankful for Jack (6 girls).

Merry Christmas (4 girls).

TEN PLAYS FOR BOYS

By George M. Baker and others

A collection of popular plays, new and old, for boys of the school age, offering a wide variety of choice and providing a convenient means for making a selection of material for this purpose.

Price, 30 cents

CONTENTS

Not Wanted—A Wife (3 boys).

The Freedom of the Press (8 boys).

The Great Elixir (9 boys).

The Humors of the Strike (8 boys).

My Uncle the Captain (6 boys).

New Broom Sweeps Clean (6 boys).

A Tender Attachment (7 boys).

Dizzy's Dilemmas (4 boys).

Hypnotism (5 boys).

Julius Cæsar in two acts (10 boys).

THE ELF THAT STAYED BEHIND

And Other Plays for Children

By Madeline Poole

Five exceptionally pretty, picturesque and actable little plays for young folks, all produced at various times by the author. Including one of the Colonial period, one of the Revolutionary and a Christmas play turning upon incidents of the present war in Belgium, the latter admirably suited for Red Cross entertainments. Strongly recommended for both literary and dramatic merit.

Price, 30 cents

CONTENTS

The Elf that Stayed Behind (1 boy, 5 girls).

The Goblins (6 boys, 2 girls).

The Quaker Way (3 boys, 4 girls).

The Christmas Box (3 boys, 3 girls).

A Puritan Prank (4 boys, 4 girls).

A CAMP FIRE CINDERELLA

A Camp Fire Play in One Act

By Mrs. Arthur T. Seymour

Six females. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern and Camp Fire. Plays twenty minutes. Gertrude, the younger sister, is refused membership in the Camp Fire organization by her two sisters who use her as their drudge, but her efficiency and unselfishness win out for her in the end. Well recommended.

Price, 15 cents

CAUGHT OUT

A Farce in Three Acts

By H. Manley Dana

Nine male, two female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays an hour and a half. De Witt Boyd is jollied into making a foolish bet that he will propose to Bess Mason and be rejected. She overhears the plot and accepts him instead, thus getting both herself and him into all kinds of a mess. A baseball play, full of action and interest, recommended to high schools. Easy and effective; free from royalty.

Price, 15 cents

CHARACTERS

BILL RANDOLPH	}	<i>playing on the Carlton Springs summer baseball team.</i>
DICK ROGERS		
JACK DAVIS		
GEORGE BROWN		
KENNETH MARSH		
CHARLIE KING	}	
DE WITT BOYD, manager of the team.		
HARRY WILKES, formerly an Amherst pitcher; now wanted to pitch on the Carlton team.		
MR. WEAVER, afflicted with sunstroke. Has come to Carlton Springs to take the cure.		
BESS MASON	}	<i>both staying at the Carlton Springs Hotel.</i>
CHRISTABEL LEE		
HOTEL WAITERS.		

Remainder of team and substitutes.

A TAKING WAY

A Farce in One Act

By Innis G. Osborn

Four male, two female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays forty-five minutes. Jacobus Harwinton, a newly-wed with a very jealous better half, gets by mistake into John Halsey's flat, taking it for that of a friend that has been loaned him for his honeymoon, and inherits all of John's troubles, including Jennie, a very up-to-date typewriter, to say nothing of a casual burglar. Very swift and funny and strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

LOCAL AND LONG DISTANCE

A Farce in One Act

By H. Manley Dana

One male, six female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays half an hour. George Davis, home from Yale with a broken leg, is left in charge of the house for an hour of a rainy day, and thus anchored trouble revolves around him like a wheel, largely turned by the charming Kitty Parsons who takes this chance to be revenged upon him for a little slight. Irresistibly funny to all telephone users. Strongly recommended.

Price, 15 cents

H. W. Pinero's Plays

Price, 50 Cents Each

MID-CHANNEL Play in Four Acts. Six males, five females.
Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors.
Plays two and a half hours.

THE NOTORIOUS MRS. EBBSMITH Drama in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, all interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE PROFLIGATE Play in Four Acts. Seven males, five females. Scenery, three interiors, rather elaborate; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS Farce in Three Acts. Nine males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE SECOND MRS. TANQUERAY Play in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

SWEET LAVENDER Comedy in Three Acts. Seven males, four females. Scene, a single interior, costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE THUNDERBOLT Comedy in Four Acts. Ten males, nine females. Scenery, three interiors; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE TIMES Comedy in Four Acts. Six males, seven females. Scene, a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE WEAKER SEX Comedy in Three Acts. Eight males, eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening.

A WIFE WITHOUT A SMILE Comedy in Three Acts. Five males, four females. Costumes, modern; scene, a single interior. Plays a full evening.

Sent prepaid on receipt of price by

Walter H. Baker & Company

No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts



The William Warren Edition of Plays

Price, 15 Cents Each

AS YOU LIKE IT Comedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

CAMILLE Drama in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

INGOMAR Play in Five Acts. Thirteen males, three females. Scenery varied; costumes, Greek. Plays a full evening.

MARY STUART Tragedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females, and supernumeraries. Costumes, of the period; scenery, varied and elaborate. Plays a full evening.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE Comedy in Five Acts. Seventeen males, three females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery varied. Plays a full evening.

RICHELIEU Play in Five Acts. Fifteen males, two females. Scenery elaborate; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

THE RIVALS Comedy in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER Comedy in Five Acts. Fifteen males, four females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL Comedy in Five Acts. Ten males, three females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

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